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# Farm Broadcasters Letter



United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2473

Aug. 24, 1990

**ONE U.S. FARMER NOW PROVIDES** 128 people with food & fiber -- up from 123 a year ago. That includes 94 people in the U.S. & 34 abroad. One U.S. farmworker now supplies 101 people with food & fiber. That includes 74 people in the U.S. & 27 people abroad, for a total of 100.8 in 1988. A "farmworker" includes the farmer (farm operator), unpaid farm family workers and hired workers. In 1988, there were 2.8 million farmworkers. Contact: Jim Hauver (202) 786-1459.

**FARM WORKERS DOWN, WAGES UP** -- During the week of July 8 - 14, there were 3.69 million people working on the Nation's farms & ranches. This number was down 3 percent from the 3.80 million during the same week in 1989. Farm operators paid their workers an average of \$5.30 per hour, up 7 cents from last year. Self-employed operators worked an average of 40.7 hours during the week, 1 hour less than last year. Source: "Farm Labor." Contact: Tim Placke (202) 475-3228.

**"AGRICULTURAL TRADE REFORM** is critically important if all countries of the world are to experience a healthy, vigorous trading environment in the coming years," Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter told the Thai Federation of Industries & Board of Trade, in Bangkok, Thailand, recently. Yeutter was visiting Asian nations to express U.S. support for the GATT trade reforms being negotiated in Geneva. "Without agricultural trade reform there will be no overall trade agreement in the Uruguay Round of Gatt -- and that would be tragic for every trading nation on Earth," Yeutter said. Contact: Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623.

**FRENCH TASTE FOR U.S. FRUIT JUICE GROWS** -- Sitting at a chic outdoor cafe on the Champs Elysees, a health-conscious French consumer these days may be more likely to drink a glass of juice than a glass of wine. And, U.S. fruit juice exporters are reaping the benefits of this latest trend. U.S. juice sales to France during 1985-1988 jumped nearly 40 percent to \$10.7 million. Grapefruit juice, in particular, is well-positioned in the French market due to its high-quality image. Contact: Lynn K. Goldsbrough (202) 382-9442.

**FOOD PRICES EXPECTED TO RISE** -- Food prices are expected to average 5 to 7 percent higher this year than in 1989, USDA economists say. Double-digit price gains in the first half of 1990 for fresh fruits, pork, eggs and dairy products, along with the uncertainties about future energy prices, account for the increases. The good news is that most of the year's price increases probably took place in the first half of the year. Contact: Greg Gajewski (202) 786-3313.

**MARKETING ORDERS COVER 44.5 BILLION IN CROPS** -- A market-control system that farmers in the early 20th Century used with limited success, is thriving as the century draws to a close. The controls allow horticultural producers in a geographic area to determine collectively how, and sometimes when, their crops will go on the market. The control system didn't take hold until it was sanctioned as federal marketing orders under a law passed during the Great Depression, says USDA Economist Nicholas J. Powers. Congress spent four years designing a marketing-order system that would pass Constitutional muster, Powers says. Contact: Nicholas J. Powers (202) 786-1868.

**GLOBAL & U.S. WHEAT SUPPLIES** are growing faster than they're being used, USDA economists say. Record global wheat production is forecast to exceed expanding consumption, leading to a 15 percent increase in global ending stocks from the low 1989-90 levels. Trade is forecast to remain relatively flat. Prices have fallen to their lowest since before the 1988 North American drought. Contact: Ed Allen (202) 786-1840.

**AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH** is no longer a simple question of "one problem, one solution," says R. Dean Plowman, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. "We are seeing our research often go beyond addressing a single agricultural problem," Plowman says. "what adds to farm income -- such as a new use for a commodity -- also can open up new businesses and even play a role in a nutritious diet." Contact: Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089.

**GETTING THE SCOOP ON ICE CREAM** -- From Tokyo's Ginza to the Eiffel Tower, U.S. ice cream is hot! Last year, overseas customers licked & slurped their way through \$9.4 million worth of U.S. ice cream. This means U.S. sales to foreign markets tripled in volume & value over the past five years, with further increases expected this year. Ice cream exports include both hard & soft ice cream, ice milk, sherbet & water ices. Contact: Lynn K. Goldsbrough (202) 382-9442.

**THE AMERICAN DIET** has changed quite a bit over the last two decades. Beef consumption, for example fell almost 7 percent between 1966-68 & 1986-88, while chicken rose nearly 72 percent, turkey 80 percent and fish & shellfish more than 38 percent. Egg use has also declined, while cheese has increased steadily. Fresh fruits & vegetables reached record levels in 1988, with fresh broccoli one of the biggest gainers, increasing over 94 percent between 1966-68 & 1986-88. What's responsible? Diet & health concerns and increases in real disposable income. New products, particularly more convenient ones, also contributed to shifts in consumption, along with an aging population, advertising campaigns, smaller households, more two-earner households, more single-person households & an increasing proportion of ethnic minorities in the U.S. population. Contact: Judith Jones Putnam (202) 786-1870.

## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

- AGRICULTURE USA #1733** -- Brenda Curtis visits & reports on the sugar industry in Florida. (Weekly 13-1/2 minute documentary.)
- CONSUMER TIME #1215** -- Heat, sports & fluids; lawn care for the upcoming fall season; landscaping tips; living with yellowjackets; into the hornets' nest! (Weekly consumer features 2-1/2 to 3 minutes long.)
- AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1722** -- USDA News Highlights; off-farm income gaining importance; soybean pricing strategies; integrated pest management gets a boost; are young farmers an endangered species? (Weekly news features.)
- NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1334** -- Rebuilding old muscles; side benefits of exercise; marginal copper deficiency; yeast protects fruit; detecting citrus blight. (Weekly research feature stories.)
- UPCOMING ON USDA'S RADIO NEWSLINE** -- Wed., Aug. 29, ag income & finance outlook; Thurs., Aug. 30, world tobacco situation; Fri., Aug. 31, ag prices; Mon., Sept. 3 is a federal holiday so the Aug. 31 newslines will remain until 5 p.m., EST, Sept. 4; Tues., Sept. 4, no scheduled reports; Wed., Sept. 5, crop/weather update. No scheduled USDA reports until Sept. 11, crop/weather update.

**DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.**  
Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

**FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE**  
(Week of Aug. 23, 25 & 27)

- FEATURES** -- Pat O'Leary reports on USDA's "Ag in the Classroom" program; Lynn Wyvill reports on the value of volunteers to USDA's Forest Service; Chris Larson reports on water quality demo projects.
- ACTUALITIES** -- Norton Strommen, USDA meteorologist, with a crop & weather update; Jim Schaub, USDA economist, on U.S. peanut production; Greg Gajewski, USDA economist, with a new U.S. agricultural outlook; Steve Milmo, USDA economist, on U.S. ag trade; Ed Allen, USDA economist, on the U.S. wheat situation; Lonnie King, USDA veterinarian, on new regulations to control salmonella outbreaks.
- UPCOMING FEATURES** -- Pat O'Leary reports on USDA grain inspection improvements; Will Pemble reports on edible food coatings.

Available on Satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY . . . . 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Transponder 12D (Channel 23)  
SATURDAY . . . . 10:30 - 11:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 10D (Channel 19)  
MONDAY . . . . 8:30 - 9:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 12D (Channel 23)



**OFFMIKE**

**WINTER WHEAT**...planting is underway in Kansas. Hap Larson (KBUF, Garden City) says the ground moisture situation is much improved over last year. Conditions helped produce a record wheat harvest for Kansas, but with other states bringing in good yields, prices are down. Hap provided coverage of the recent Kansas Livestock Association conference in Wichita, with six broadcasts a day.

**AG PROGRESS DAYS**...at Rock Springs, Pa., were covered by Bill Ray (Agrinet Farm Radio Network, Richmond, Va). Bill broadcast live from the site for the three days, feeding his network's 100 stations. Our Brenda Curtis & Lynn Wyvill visited Agrinet's on-site satellite facilities.

**INSECTS**...second brood corn borers, spider mites, chinch bug & leaf hoppers -- are damaging crops in eastern Nebraska, says Gary Schoepf (WJAG/KEXL Norfolk). Even so, contestants at fairs showed some of the best looking products in years, Gary says. Topsoil moisture is in surplus for the first time since the drought began, allowing producers to shut off irrigation systems.

### ***Farm Broadcasters Letter***

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**PLANTING DELAYS**...are now causing fields of corn to pollinate over a several week period, says Bill Mason (WGEL, Greenville, Ill.) Producers don't often see such unevenness in their area, he says. The wet season interfered with wheat crop. Only a fair crop developed and most of it is being used as animal feed.

**THANKS**...to Al Gustin (KFYR/Meyer Broadcasting, Bismarck, N.D.) for sending a copy of FARWEST magazine of the Bismarck Tribune. Cover and two-page spread is about Al and farm broadcasting. With pictures and well-written article by Deena Kromarek of the Tribune staff, its a positive item to the general public about the service of farm broadcasting. Lots of good quotes, including this one of Al's view of being raised on a farm: "I think that you have a better appreciation for the value of work. You get to work alongside your parents. You learn responsibility a little earlier. Its a good way to be brought up."

**VIC POWELL**  
Chief, Radio & TV Division